

Message Text

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ACTION H-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 0036

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PO, AO

SUBJECT: CODEL MCGOVERN: ANGOLA

SUMMARY: SENATOR MCGOVERN RAISED THE ANGOLAN ISSUE WITH BROAD RANGE OF PORTUGUESE LEADERS DURING HIS JANUARY 2-3 VISIT, FOCUSING ON USG POLICY. PORTUGUESE LEADERS ALL FELT A CONTINUING U.S. LEADERSHIP ROLE WAS NECESSARY, ALTHOUGH COVERT USG ACTION WAS NOT NECESSARILY SUPPORTED. PORTUGUESE LEADERS, IN VARIOUS DEGREES, WERE ALL CRITICAL OF SOVIET/CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING HIS JANUARY 2-3 VISIT IN LISBON SENATOR MCGOVERN HELD USEFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH A BROAD SPECTRUM OF PORTUGUESE LEADERS. THIS MESSAGE CONCERNS ANGOLA. OTHER TOPICS IN SEPTEL.

2. PRIME MINISTER: RESPONDING TO THE SENATOR'S QUERY, PRIME MINISTER PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO SAID THAT GOP POLICY TOWARD ANGOLA WOULD BE DETERMINED BY WHAT THE USG DOES. HE DREW ATTENTION TO THE SENATE'S RECENT ACTION ON ANGOLA. AZEVEDO AGREED WITH SENATOR MCGOVERN THAT NEITHER THE USSR NOR THE USG SHOULD BE INVOLVED DIRECTLY IN ANGOLA. AZEVEDO RECOMMENDED THAT THE USG ACT THROUGH FRIENDLY AFRICAN AND WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (HE CITED FRANCE AND THE U.K.) IN ORDER TO INFLUENCE THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA TO ACHIEVE USG AND GOP OBJECTIVES. AZEVEDO SAID HE KNEW MPLA LEADER AGOSTINHO NETO WELL SOME YEARS AGO, AND THEY WERE QUITE

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FRIENDLY THEN. BUT NOW, THE PRIME MINISTER CONFESSED,

HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND NETO'S PRO-SOVIET ACTIONS. SENATOR MCGOVERN NOTED THAT HE TOO FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN THE USSR'S AGGRESSIVENESS IN ANGOLA.

3. MARIO SOARES: IN RESPONSE TO THE SENATOR'S QUERY ON THE ANGOLAN SITUATION, SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER SOARES SAID THAT IN THE DAYS IMMEDIATELY PRECEEDING ANGOLA'S INDEPENDENCE ON NOVEMBER 11, THE GOP HAD BEEN UNDER HEAVY, HIGH-LEVEL PRESSURE TO RECOGNIZE THE MPLA. THE SOCIALISTS HAD SUCCESSFULLY FOUGHT AGAINST THIS INSIDE THE GOP. IN SOARES'S VIEW THE MPLA WAS CONTROLLED BY THE USSR. SOARES STATED THAT ALGERIANS AND YUGOSLAVIANS HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE MPLA SHOULD BE SUPPORTED IN ORDER TO PREVENT THEM FROM BECOMING PRISONERS OF THE SOVIETS. SOARES SAID HE DISAGREES WITH THIS POSITION AND THAT THE MPLA IS ALREADY A GONER. SOARES SAID THAT AN MPLA VICTORY WOULD MEAN "THE SOVIETNIZATION OF ANGOLA."

4. THE SENATOR REFERRED TO THE RECENT SENATE VOTE CUTTING OFF COVERT AID AND ASKED FOR SOARES'S COUNSEL ON THIS SCORE. SOARES SAID IT WOULD BE PRESUMPTUOUS FOR HIM TO COMMENT ON DOMESTIC U.S. AFFAIRS ABOUT WHICH HE HAD NEITHER THE CAPACITY NOR KNOWLEDGE TO SPEAK. BUT, LEAVING ASIDE THE INTERNAL U.S. ASPECT, SOARES HOPED THE USG WOULD NOT REMAIN PASSIVE REGARDING ANGOLA; HE HOPED THE USG WOULD NOT REMAIN INDIFFERENT TO SOVIET AND CUBAN ACTIONS. THE SENATOR NOTED THAT OTHER LEADING SENATORS SUCH AS SENATORS HUMPHREY AND CASE, WHO HAD VOTED AGAINST U.S. COVERT ASSISTANCE VIA THE CIA, ALSO WANTED THE USG TO BE INVOLVED -- BUT IN AN OPEN WAY VIA OTHER MEANS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE USG COULD USE ITS GRAIN SALES AND DETENTE WITH THE USSR. WHAT DID SOARES THINK OF THIS? SOARES AGREED THAT IT WAS BETTER TO BE OPEN, WHILE STRESSING THE NEED FOR USG INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROBLEM.

5. SOARES SAID HE WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. HE HAD RETURNED ONLY MORNING JAN 3 FROM VENEZUELA. THERE HE HAD BEEN TOLD THAT THE USG WAS BLOCKING THE CUBANS FROM USING LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES FOR REFUELING, ETC. SOARES SAID THE USG SHOULD PRESS FORWARD ON THIS LINE AND

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DO WHAT IT COULD TO PREVENT THE CUBANS FROM AIDING THE MPLA. THE SENATOR ASKED SOARES IF CUBA WAS ALSO USING THE AZORES IN TRANSIT TO ANGOLA. SOARES SAID THAT THE U.S. CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN CARACAS HAD TOLD HIM SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER THAT THIS WAS THE CASE. HE INTENDS TO TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER.

6. CONTINUING ON CUBA, SOARES SAID THAT AFTER GUEVARA'S

DEATH CASTRO HAD SEEMED TO ADOPT A SOFTER POLICY OF NOT EXPORTING REVOLUTION. NOW THIS HAD CHANGED SHARPLY. REFERRING TO THE SENATOR'S VISIT TO CUBA, SOARES ASKED IF HE COULD SHED ANY LIGHT ON THIS CHANGE. THE SENATOR SAID THAT HE, TOO, WAS SURPRISED AT THIS SUDDEN TURN IN CUBAN POLICY. PERHAPS PRESSURE FROM THE USSR WAS THE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 0036

LIMDIS

CAUSE? SOARES THOUGHT THIS WAS THE CASE. THE SOCIALIST LEADER NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN IN 1968 OR 1969 A FEW CUBAN SOLDIERS WERE FIGHTING WITH THE THEN REBELS IN GUINEA-BISSAU.

7. SA CARNEIRO: RESPONDING TO THE SENATOR'S QUERY ON ANGOLA, PPD LEADER SA CARNEIRO SAID THAT THE USSR HAD RETURNED TO THE COLD WAR, THAT THE HELSINKI ACCORDS WERE DEAD, AND THAT THE WEST HAD BETTER REALIZE THIS. SA CARNEIRO VIEWED SOVIET INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA AS PART OF THIS LARGER PATTERN. REGARDING ANGOLA SPECIFICALLY, SA CARNEIRO MAINTAINED THAT SOVIET TACTICS IN PORTUGAL SINCE APRIL 1974 HAD ALWAYS BEEN HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY PORTUGUESE AFRICA -- THAT MAY BE WHAT THEY HAD THEIR EYE ON ALL THE TIME. SA CARNEIRO DREW THE SENATOR'S ATTENTION TO THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY, ESPECIALLY IN THE PERIOD IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING ANGOLA'S NOVEMBER 11 INDEPENDENCE, NOTING THAT PCP ACTIONS LENT CREDENCE TO HEAVY SOVIET EMPHASIS ON AFRICA. SA CARNEIRO BELIEVED THAT HOWEVER THE USG PURSUED ITS POLICY, IT HAD A ROLE TO PLAY IN ANGOLA.

8. JOAO CRAVINHO: FORMER INDUSTRY MINISTER AND LEADING

MARXIST INTELLECTUAL JOAO CRAVINHO SAID THAT IT WAS
CLEAR THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS WERE INTERVENING IN ANGOLA
BUT HARD TO KNOW EXACTLY WHY. CRAVINHO NOTED THAT MANY
INTERESTS WERE AT STAKE IN ANGOLA -- MAINLY ECONOMIC AND
STRATEGIC -- BOTH FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE WEST
AS WELL AS THE USSR. CRAVINHO SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT
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FOR THE USG TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO BE OVERLY INVOLVED OR
GET ON THE WRONG SIDE IN ANGOLA. THE REAL PROBLEM FOR
THE WEST WAS TO MOVE RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA IN THE
DIRECTION OF MAJORITY RULE. THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM COULD
BE SOLVED, AND SHOULD BE SOLVED IN SUCH A WAY AS NOT TO
LOSE INFLUENCE OVER THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN THESE OTHER
TWO COUNTRIES.
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